IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of generating a hash signal representative of a multimedia signal, the method comprising:

receiving a bit-stream comprising a compressed multimedia signal to be divided into a plurality of time frames;

selectively reading from the bit-stream predetermined parameters in [[a]] the plurality of time frames, wherein said predetermined parameters relate to perceptual information of the multimedia signal;

calculating a separate hash word from said parameters for each time frame to provide a set of hash words over a period of time encompassed by the plurality of time frames; and

deriving a hash function by a concatenation of the set of hash words.

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Previously presented) The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the multimedia signal comprises at least one of an audio signal, a video signal and an image signal.

4. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the multimedia signal has been compressed using at least one of transform encoding, subband encoding and parametric encoding.

5. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said predetermined parameters relate to at least one of the energies of frequency bands; the amplitudes of frequency bands; the tonality of frequency bands; the luminance of an area of a video signal; and the chrominance of an area of a video signal.

6. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the method further comprises analyzing the received bit-stream in order to determine the decoding scheme used to compress the multimedia signal.

7. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 6, wherein said analyzing comprises comparing the properties of the bit-stream with a database containing properties of a number of coding schemes.

8. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said selectively reading predetermined parameters comprises:

locating said predetermined parameters within the bit-stream by using a syntax description;

reading the located predetermined parameters; and

decoding the predetermined parameter using a decoder description.

9. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said predetermined parameters relate to a first set of frequency bands, and wherein the deriving the hash function comprises deriving estimates of values of spectral information present in a second set of frequency bands from the predetermined parameters, the hash function subsequently being calculated from the estimated values.

10. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said multimedia signal is compressed using a parametric encoding scheme, and wherein the predetermined parameters relate to at least one of the sinusoidal components, the noise components and the transient components utilized within the parametric scheme.

11. (Currently Amended) A computer readable medium including a computer program arranged to, when executed by a computer, generate a hash signal representative of a multimedia signal by:

receiving a bit-stream comprising a compressed multimedia signal to be divided into a plurality of time frames;

selectively reading from the bit-stream predetermined parameters in [[a]] the plurality of time frames, wherein said predetermined parameters relate to perceptual information of the multimedia signal;

calculating a separate hash word from said parameters for each time frame to provide a set of hash words over a period of time encompassed by the plurality of time frames; and

deriving a hash function by a concatenation of the set of hash words.

12. (Cancelled)

13. (Cancelled)

14. (Cancelled)

15. (Currently Amended) An apparatus arranged to generate a hash signal representative of a multimedia signal, the apparatus comprising:

a receiver arranged to receive a bit-stream comprising a compressed multimedia signal to be divided into a plurality of time frames;

a decoder arranged to selectively read from the bit-stream predetermined parameters in [[a]] the plurality of time frames, wherein said predetermined parameters relate to perceptual information of the multimedia signal; and

a processing unit arranged to calculate a separate hash word from said parameters for each time frame to provide a set of hash words over a period of time encompassed by the plurality of time frames and derive a hash function by a concatenation of the set of hash words.